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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the impact on preservice teachers of an education course entitled "Teacher as Change Agent" which was inaugurated in 1991 at Union College (Schenectady, New York). The course represents a concerted effort to help beginning teachers bridge the gap between the real and ideal in public education without losing their sense of idealism. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with nine interns completing a year-long Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. During the interviewing process, students were asked about their reasons for going into teaching, their ideals at the beginning of the year-long program, changes in ideals as a result of teaching internships and coursework, and the current status of their ideals. Additional data were collected from weekly journals kept by the 35 student interns, instructors' notes, and weekly reaction papers. Four periods in the interns' retrospective accounts of the program and their teaching were discerned: (1) a naive idealism; (2) confrontation with the realities and complexities of teaching, with focus turning to content and pedagogy; (3) a pessimism and depression that in part reflected the socialization of schools and an inability to bring ideals into the classroom; and (4) the re-emergence of ideals as interns began to see themselves as potential agents of change due to the explicit focus in seminar. The syllabus for the course, "Teacher as Change Agent" is appended. (LL)

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Teacher as Change Agent: Helping Pre-Service Teachers Articulate Their Visions

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Teacher as Change Agent: Helping Pre-Service Teachers Articulate Their Visions

Framework and Objectives

As teacher educators we struggle with the fact that there is a tremendous gap between the reality of schooling and our visions of education. For beginning teachers the struggle can be overwhelming. How do we get novice teachers to come to terms with this struggle without losing their sense of idealism? In the Spring of 1991, we developed a course entitled: Teacher as Change Agent, in an effort to help beginning teachers cope with this struggle.

The Educational Studies Master of Arts in Teaching Program (MAT) at Union College, Schenectady, NY, began preparing secondary teachers in 1989. Unique program aspects include a full year teaching internship preceded by an intensive summer term (8:30 AM - 6:00 PM daily for eight weeks, with pedagogical coursework, microteaching laboratories, and an Outward Bound experience half-way through the summer), a full year seminar which parallels the internship, and program emphases on: the reflective practitioner, networking with peers, multiple models of teaching, journal writing, pedagogical content knowledge, and the idea that teachers can and must be agents of change.

The idea of teacher as change agent was an underlying theme through the summer, fall, and winter terms of the 1990-91 academic year (the program's second cohort). In the spring term, the entire academic term was devoted to an explicit exploration of teacher as change agent. Seminar discussions and readings were focused on professionalism, teacher unions, teachers' lives, women in education, burnout, empowerment, teaching as a political

process, bottom-up versus top-down reform, alternative schools, alternatives within public schools, critical pedagogy, and teacher as researcher (see course syllabus, Appendix A).

The first objective of this study was to describe the pre-service teachers' retrospective accounts of their ideals through the year long program. The second objective was to describe the impact on those ideals, if any, of the "teacher as change agent" seminar. Additionally, we also want to share with the teacher education community our course materials and experiences from the seminar.

Methods and Data Source

Data for the study were collected through nine in-depth interviews (25.7% of the cohort) with interns near the conclusion of the MAT program. Additional data were collected from weekly journals kept by the 35 student interns over the course of the year, from instructors' notes on weekly seminar discussions, and from weekly papers written in reaction to the various required readings during the spring seminar. These additional materials were used to validate and supplement the interview data.

The nine student interns who were interviewed represented a random sample of the cohort stratified by gender (four males, five females) and subject area (two biology, one chemistry, one English, one German, two social studies, one physics, and one mathematics).

The nine interns taught in five different school districts. Four interns taught in an urban school, three in suburban schools, and two in suburban/rural schools. Five of the interns taught in a senior high school building (9-12), three in a junior high building (7-8), and one intern taught in both.

Students participated in audio-taped interviews ranging from one hour to two hours in length. They were first asked to describe why they went into teaching. We then asked them to trace their ideals from the beginning of the program in the summer of 1990 through May of 1991. Specifically, they were asked to focus on any changes in their ideals as a result of their teaching internships and the year-long seminar. Finally they were asked, "Where are your ideals now?" Written transcripts of the interviews were produced. The transcripts were distilled, focusing on major topics and then were read to determine themes across subjects.

Results

Why the Interns Went Into Teaching

We asked the student interns why they went into teaching to set a context for a discussion of their ideals. One intern indicated her motives were "political" and reflected a desire to make a global change in education or to "change the world." This intern also noted that she was only going to effect impact if she had a degree.

> D: When I decided to become a teacher, it was because I saw that there was something very wrong with the public schools, and that the only way I was going to get into a school to teach was to get a degree - so my thinking was I had to go to school.

Several of the interns described having personal "visions" of "wanting to make a difference" for their students or of wanting to be like some inspirational teacher in their past or unlike "bad" or ineffective teachers in their past. The remaining interns indicated personal reasons reflecting self-interest; they saw the personal benefits to the profession and/or they felt that it fit their individual personalities well. Some interns looked back on their motives for entering teaching and characterized them as naive.

> E: I had a vision of my own classroom and education and I suppose I expected kids like the ones I went to high school with to some degree. I suppose unconsciously that's what you expect, that's what you envision - you know, bright motivated kids for the most part - white middle class - nice suburban area - oh but then I'd say politically correct things [like] "I'd like to eventually teach in NYC" without having any real concept of what that means. Not that I was lying, I was just uninformed. You know I'm going to change these kids and I am going to be the one they remember and all that. Everybody has that kind of idealistic view when they go in.

Reflections on the Summer Program

During the eight-week summer program (June, 1990 - August, 1990) the interns were going to "bring everything alive for [their] students." They were sure they were going to have a strong impact on their students and create a great deal of change.

Reflecting on their experiences in the summer program, the students recalled changes in their perspectives on teaching. Many of the interns felt that they were suddenly confronted with the complexities of teaching; teaching was more than just establishing relationships with kids.

> K: I didn't think teaching was as hard as it was. I thought it was a lot easier... My perception was that I would walk in and that would be it. That was very different when I really got into it. The level of preparation I wasn't prepared for.

> C: I didn't realize what teaching was really going to be. Teaching was only being a buddy and a role model for a kid. My expectations were that I was going to have a class of 25 kids and be a buddy to each and everyone of them; a kind of a role model and have a personal relationship with each and everyone of them. S. said to me, "Its really easy to have a personal relationship with a kid. The really hard part is teaching them and helping them to become competent or successful within society." I half bought that when he told me that, but I think the summer program really demonstrated that to me, really showed me how complex teaching can be - just in classroom management, discipline, and then just getting the knowledge across.

B: I don't think I had any idea of what it was like. I must have had some conception of teaching, but its totally changed. Before you start the internship, you just have no idea, and the microteaching I knew wasn't much like it, but I just didn't have any real conception of what teaching would be.

T: I didn't really have many ideals coming in. The things I was thinking about; I want to go into the schools and have my students like me, and like coming to my class. Over the summer I thought about how important the teaching part is, more than just popularity and having kids have fun, [but] getting them to be more interested in the stuff and worrying more about it, and [realizing] how much work it is to do that. I thought beforehand, I don't need education courses, just see what's nice in the book and teach that. So I guess it opened my eyes this summer, its more of a complex situation than I had realized.

Reflection on Fall Term Teaching

During their first term of teaching (September, 1990 - December, 1990), the interns were dealing with the practicalities of learning how to teach and were increasingly aware of how difficult the task of "just teaching" was. Either they recalled not having time to focus on their ideals, or they recognized an initial conflict between their ideals and their actual experiences in the schools.

K: Fall was a buzz, struggling to remember what I was doing the next day and keeping everything straight...Fall was survival, it was like boot camp. One day to the next, can you survive the next 40 minutes? Every class period was a trial and an ordeal and involved lots of stress.

E: I found my ideals very high at the beginning, taking a slope downward... you start to hear other teachers talk. That happened sooner and more than I expected it to. I thought that they would kind of keep quiet around the new kid. They start to chip away at the ideals. Not that they intentionally are doing that but they see you and they want to teach you through their experience, to learn through their experience. Which is valuable, but also a tough blow especially when you start finding out they are right in many ways. Its hard to take their advice without letting it shatter your ideals.

With respect to the fall term, the interns also recalled difficulties with discipline, organization, and time management. Their emotions ranged from excited to scared to overwhelmed.

Reflections on Winter Term Teaching

During the winter term (January, 1991 - March, 1991) many interns showed signs of depression. Some felt they were never going to achieve their original ideals and visions. One intern expressed the belief that the summer program had been "a waste; why learn all those instructional models and try to be creative when the only models really used are direct instruction and nobody has the time to be creative? That's not what's done in the real world." Students also expressed a conflict between their desire to implement personal or social models (ala Joyce & Weil, 1986) and the pressures of teaching content and "covering the material."

> T: I hoped by that time that I would have kids coming in and saying "I like physics." [That they would] realize that you could have fun doing this as opposed to [for] a lot of them, physics in general just wasn't their bag. I started wondering how that reflected on my teaching.

> K: I don't know how realistic it is to struggle with the ideal when you have 35 kids in your class, when the discrepancy between the real and the ideal becomes so large that you can't deal with it anymore.
>
> I thought about leaving very strongly and seriously. I didn't feel like I had any personal connection to teaching "just pass your homework to the front." I thought that immediately I would have their respect and know that I was serious, and that what we're doing is important and I think they should think that its important too. Eventually, what I did, I just shut up and faced what was going on and then decided that I was going to make some real changes... [So,] I changed their seats. I developed a writing program. I wanted them to have a mission, and I always thought that would be implicit, but it had to become explicit.
>
> So I decided to change some things pretty rapidly... I decided that instead of reacting to them, that I was going to act upon them, and put the

> ball in my court. I felt a lot better about the kids. I could be nice to them and not worry and vice versa. It was just much more of a personal relationship. And they just started to take it more seriously, the quality of their work went up and they weren't handing in garbage [anymore]. And then all the details started to come into play that I hadn't been able to deal with, they just hadn't become part of my routine. All the work started to be worth it at the end of winter term, instead of being a real pain in the butt. I went from just dead bottom to all of a sudden, things just started to look much better. I felt more confident about myself. I had a more realistic idea of time and a better idea of what would interest them. I had a better handle on what was going on. I could be myself and not have to worry. The first three months were more of an image thing. You know, I am the teacher and you will listen to me and you're trying to salvage your personality for yourself. In February and March you see the uphill climb and each class is a process instead of a discrete unit. Around March or April that was the best time, and an uphill climb from then until now.

By the end of winter term, most of the interns began to see their teaching skills "coming together" and began to discover relationships with kids.

> D: I was feeling more balanced with the kids, because I was handling the kids. I could make myself accessible and have them feel as though I really cared, but yet not jeopardize my position. I've seen better tests, rising test scores, dealing with parents, getting kids in for resource and quick tutoring sessions, giving them feedback on their work and being able to do that more comfortably. All that was progress.

Despite the depression which many of them felt, some interns also began to see the real possibilities of "making a difference" with at least one student, or the overall impact of improvements in their teaching skills.

> E: My ideals were hitting the pits in November through January, but they went back up. One kid in my class helped. He finished the first quarter with a 28 average. You could sit there and talk to him till you were blue in the face and he would work very hard. He just couldn't get it. One day we were sitting there working with some algebraics and some x's and y's and he just kind of looked at me and said "Oh, they're numbers!" and I just was stunned. I thought we had made that clear. And just that one little realization. He started telling me about all of these places where it tied in together. "Oh, this is just like what we were doing before." I mean, he went from within a span

of 30 seconds, went from one of the worst students in the class to one of the best and he was making ties that I didn't think any of the kids in the course could make. He became the example, "It can happen", but for everyone of him there are other examples of students failing. At different points that kicks you in the butt, and I think now as you see some of your kids get to like you, and get to know you and say nice things to you, it brings on a little bit more idealism into it.

K: I hated it, I dreaded going to school everyday. I despised it...I hated what I was teaching. Read a chapter and then [talk about] what was happening in that chapter. I hate that, its not teaching. And all of a sudden, people started talking about unions and budget cuts, and talk about work to rule... There were some real problems in class. At that point I was just really unhappy with everything that was happening. There was nothing I could find that I was happy about. Except, my American Lit. kids all of a sudden started to turn around. All of a sudden they became my favorite class, and I was happy to go in there instead of despising it. I structured the time more and I moved their seats around which is the best thing I ever did. And then I was able to gradually give them more control of the class. I am really happy with the class now. I really love them.

Reflections on Spring Term Teaching

By the beginning of spring term (April, 1991), many of the interns were feeling much more comfortable with their teaching skills. All of the interns had increased autonomy and responsibilities. Some were focused on content and some on refining their pedagogy.

T: In terms of my teaching, I'm happier with my teaching now. During this term, I had much more control. [If] a student asks a question I don't know the answer to, I'll look into to it or work something out, work something through...

I guess in the fall, it was just teaching physics. More toward the winter, it was still about teaching, but different ways to teach. I wanted the students to be more curious about things and if they see something happen and they don't know why, I want them to question it. This term too, I've been thinking more not just about physics, but about educating them, about other things.

P: Well something is beginning to happen that I never thought would. I'm beginning to see myself as a teacher. There is an arena where I have the ability to control what happens. As soon as I started to feel that what I had

to teach was worthwhile, it changed things for me. That's a very important development.

M: I think right now, trying to change things, is not one of my main goals. I want to get my confidence that I can teach a full day, and still give to all my students what I want to give to them. I guess I'm just overwhelmed with the whole idea of just beginning teaching, rather than trying to change. But I think it could be done.

Reflections on the Year-Long Seminar

One of the issues which the interns struggled with throughout the year was the classic disjunction between theory and practice. Although we worked hard to articulate those links and used methodologies such as case studies, some interns still resisted the need for theory or a theory-driven approach to teaching. Below a student reflects on the fall term seminar and its two major projects related to motivation and classroom evaluation.

B: To some extent I think the theories behind education are so much rhetoric. Its important to know them, but I think in terms of motivating students that kind of comes naturally. You don't think to yourself when you are in front of the class, well I have to make them intrinsically motivated. You have that in the back of your mind, but its not really coming to the fore.

The test construction was a real pain in the neck, but it was good to learn about that stuff, about the different kinds of scores and grading and things like that, but it was not particularly applicable to the classroom, but definitely something you should know.

We did not place an explicit emphasis on teacher as change agent until the spring term seminar, but it is interesting to note that in asking students to look back at the fall and winter terms, the concepts and the ideas from the spring term were sometimes used as a lens to think back on the previous terms. In her statement below, D makes the connection between a case study approach and teacher as researcher.

D: The motivation project showed me that there are theorists out there and teachers out there who never get together. The case study showed though, that you can get out there and be your own researcher and when you want to find out things you can go to the library and read.

T: The case study was stuff that had gone on in my head for so long I didn't really get that much out of writing it down and putting it in that kind of form. But, it wasn't just for me to get something out of it. If it were used properly, other people could use it.

E: Cases were good, got you to start thinking about teacher as researcher. The cases help you to start looking beyond just teaching. They give you a broader lens. The cases make you look at and think about handling difficult situations.

During the winter term we discussed standardized testing and students in special needs populations. While some students continued to see the connections between theory and practice others felt they had more pragmatic needs. Still others, while noting the importance of theory, did not relate it to their own classrooms.

D: I thought the measurement was very valuable to me in a practical way, as a sense of empowerment and having a sense of what I might be confronted with... Also it helped me in a more theoretical way. I got a sense of what was going on with this whole standardized testing idea, so that when I heard about reform, the president's big plan, I had a much better grasp.

E: When you hit the skids, that stuff [course material] becomes secondary except for certification, you're caught up with everyone else, your thesis, school. That was the time when I most needed to get back and talk real concretely about what was going on in the schools and what can I do with people in my field and professionals in the field...The standardized testing just wasn't relevant to my classroom, you need a slimmer focus at that point, you want to get the stuff that you're dealing with everyday.

> B: The standardized testing made me think a lot. If you mess up on your 3rd grade reading test, you're screwed. The kind of tracking that goes on starting that early is ridiculous and how it affects the people who are minorities, people who don't come from this country, it just screws them. Its kind of ridiculous. And just realizing that, some of the kids who are doing badly right now might not have started out stupid. They might just have got tracked in. Its self-defeating, if you're in with the dumb kid group, you must be dumb.
>
> Then again, I wouldn't want to teach a class that wasn't tracked. It would be too incredibly difficult. It wouldn't work, the bright kids would be so bored out of their heads and if you shot at the middle kids, that would be alright, but the slower kids would be left behind. I think its good in that sense to have a cohesive ability. You can't have a wide range, it doesn't work.

Spring Term Seminar

The summer term had included several days of reflective activities related to the ideals of the students; their ideal classrooms, their ideal teachers, their ideal schools. Yet, toward the end of the fall term those ideals were put aside. The practicalities of teaching loomed large. With the predictable depression of winter term (Ryan, 1988), their original ideals and visions seemed unobtainable; the socializing influence of the schools had taken hold, i.e. theory cannot inform practice, and the institution is impervious to change. The need for a spring term seminar devoted to the idea of teacher as change agent evolved; we wanted the students to regain their idealism and their sense that it was possible to construct a vision.

We struggled with the knowledge that spring term would be the busiest term for our students. We knew that they were taking on increasing levels of responsibility in the classroom, were completing their theses, and searching for jobs. But, at the same time we knew that this would be our last chance to plant the idea that change was possible. Some students felt they were placed in an overload situation. Others struggled with the realization that it was important in the long run, but that it was too hard to deal with now. Others

recognized the need to come back at it at a later time.

> K: I was distracted from seminar because of thesis and job hunting drove me nuts.

> E: The teacher as change agent stuff, I liked that but you get this feeling "Christ, I'm just getting so I can teach a class." I definitely think we need to be thinking about that at some point in the program. [But] at no point in this program do you feel like you're ready to do that. Even if you're confident about teaching, you still want to work on that before you get into that stuff. [But] that's part of the thing I think that started to restore the ideals, thinking along those lines again, and your initial reaction, its that kind of standoffish, "nice ideas, but what the hell does it have to do with me, I've got other things to deal with, I can't get into this." I don't have time to change the world, I'm trying to change my classroom and get ready for the Regents [examinations]. As you get into it you start to see ideas that are working and even though you can't picture yourself doing that or implementing that, you start to think in those terms that these are the kinds of things that you want to be dealing with and one day I'm going to conquer these little problems that I'm having. Then what? Am I just going to stay in my classroom now? I want to extend my focus somehow. The seminar helped me in that way bring back some of the higher ideals. You start to see, you can get through to these kids, and you're also getting these great ideas that are working somewhere and those are good things. I don't know if I would attribute all of that to seminar, but it certainly helped.

> M: I just feel like I've been soaking all of these things in. I need time to sit back and think about how they all relate to me in my life. I think once the summer comes, I might go back through the readings and see how they relate to me as a teacher and as a person.

> T: A lot of it, I felt like I would like to look over again and that's just how I feel about a lot of things in seminar. So many things I've been thinking about, I can keep any one thing. You know I just read something and it hasn't been having as big an effect on me as it could.

Much of the cohort initially responded to our now explicit curriculum on teacher as change agent with reticence and ambivalence.

> W: I think that in the seminar we are getting too much ideology, which in turn makes reality hit us harder, because if you come in with a lot of ideals, the reality is going to keep you in check because reality is not going to let ideology win over. You get very frustrated and your patience wears thin after a while and you just kind of wonder well what purpose is this?

Once the seminar was underway the students' reactions were varied. Some felt depressed by the readings, some felt the frustration of the "real versus the ideal," some noted that it felt good to be thinking about ideals again, and one student experienced a feminist awakening.

> P: The seminar has a lot of different kinds of effects on my mood during this term...[the] whole thing was really depressing...I think the readings in seminar caused a lot of cognitive dissonance for a lot of us, things that depressed me and things that really made me think. There were some things about the success stories, you know, that newspaper "Rethinking Schools." It sounded really great, but then I ask myself, could I make that work? Is that the model that we're supposed to follow. I'm still learning things that will sort of coalesce to form the basis of my ideals and what direction I think I should take and what direction education should take. I'm still lost, less lost, but I'm still lost.

> W: I think the ideals are just getting to be too much. I'm trying to apply it and when you can't really apply something, you hit a wall. After a year you're burnt - you just want to get that diploma and get a job. Some things that I've wanted all along sort of fall by the wayside - the idea that I wanted more time to reflect. I think there should be more time for reflecting.

> M: This whole term has been a real experience for me as far as the real women's issues. I never thought of any of that before... Its really enlightened me as far as that goes. Its made me just be more conscientious in the way I perceive women and the way that I want my students to perceive me.

One student felt that the seminar fell short of her needs and expectations, she was already sensitive to the ideas and wanted more direction:

D: I often came away from seminar not feeling like I came to any new understanding. I've done a lot of thinking about these kinds of things and I want to go on from there. What I need is not what a good number of people in there need.

I want you to tell me what I should do. I want to be able to benefit from your experience. There are some mistakes worth repeating and some not. Some things you know about, the school system, the political system that might help me to figure out whether I should work from the schools or whether I should work outside the schools.

One student embraced the notion of change but never personalized the ideas or thought about them in the context of his own classroom.

B: We talked about agent of change a lot, but I just sat there in class because it doesn't really apply to me. As a member of an institution I can do it, but in my chemistry class I just don't have that much of a chance to do anything. We're talking about methane and propane, we're not talking about issues. We don't have time to talk about issues. Once in a while, I'll throw in some of my values, if we're talking about hydrocarbons and burning fossil fuels, I'll make a very brief aside to help them get interested in it and I'll also throw in some of my opinions on subjects that lend themselves to the greater picture. In general there is not very much chance at all to do anything.

The seminar got me to think about the potential for change that exists if there is cohesion between all the teachers, all the subjects, the school as a whole.

I think the seminar [raised my consciousness]. I used to crack on it, because sometimes I wasn't interested in the discussions, but then sometimes, I'd get involved in really thinking about things.

The most important things I learned were not factual. I'm used to being a scientist, this is the right answer and stuff like that. My attitude at the beginning was I'm not learning that much, but the things you do learn are the broader issues, the effects of standardized testing, the effects of teacher as change agent...

We could make a huge difference, but I know that that won't happen in the next 40 years. We will not have teachers who all think in terms of freeing their students.

Other students also embraced the notion of change but expressed a fear of being co-opted or burnt out.

E: I don't know if I ever saw myself as creating change through the seminar, you hope you will. You see yourself as at least trying to think like that so that at least you will hold yourself accountable for this later on - creating a date in the future when you get to that (post tenure). In a certain sense you get afraid that you won't and try to constantly tell yourself that the system won't get to you. You're not going to be poisoned anymore.

K: Two types of teachers have emerged. There are those who have burned out, and there are those who are beating their heads against the wall. It depends on which place you stand. I'm a head beater, I can only take so much which is why I'm not going to be able to do it that long. My mentor has been teaching for about 15 to 20 years. I watched her today get slapped in the face; teachers make too much money, they are not going to support her job because they don't feel the district is a country club. This is a woman who bends over backwards to do things for kids and now she's talking about when kids come up and ask for college recommendations, getting on the phone and telling parents I can't do this and this is why. I don't how many times I could take that before getting out, before becoming a zombie like half the people there.

By the middle of the term, students began to articulate the impact that seminar was having on them.

T: Up until this term, we just learned about teaching. It was more in the classroom. This is how you do it, here are ways, here are ways to do it better. This term made me think more about teaching as a profession, ways of getting other ideas across to them, past physics and past the Regents... Things you do to change not only the way you teach but the way the whole teaching profession is and the way its looked at...

C: Sunday as I was rereading the previous articles, it was kind of fuzzy up until then; how everything fit together. And then it all sort of came together. Yes, society controls the schools and society is reflected within our schools and how little the schools can change unless society changes and without some sort of change in policy by our government... There's only so much a school can do, and we can only be as effective as our society will allow and society controls how effective our schools can be. Seminar has articulated that a little more clearly for me and our role in how we help our students become empowered also. I think that has kind of happened all year, through me being empowered as a student also.

> D: I don't feel like I have any more of a sense of disillusionment than when I came in which says to me that I had my shit together when I came in.

The results of the interviews with the interns suggests that the spring term seminar had an impact. Each intern articulated and defined his or her ideals and visions in different ways. One intern noted that the seminar "armed" her; provided her with a language to describe a political vision that she already had on an intuitive level, but now felt more confident about articulating. The intern who described her feminist awakening became conscious of the image she presented, particularly to her female students. She wanted the "young women in [her] class to know that they could be anything and do anything that they wanted." Along with this came a sense of personal and professional empowerment which was new to this intern. She felt that teachers can and do make a difference.

For some interns the seminar prompted them to think about change within their own classrooms. Other interns thought about the broader institutional and political context, and a few students connected their own individual experience in the classroom with the larger context of schooling and school reform.

> C: My ideal would be to rip down the whole system and start again, a complete revolution and change everything around...
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> I think I would probably get really frustrated by January if I were in a suburban school teaching science. I would feel claustrophobic in that school system and having so little power being an untenured first year teacher. You make too much noise and you're out of a job, especially with all the budget cuts...
>
> I don't think my ideals and my values have changed that much since last June. How I'm going to go about making a difference in my own way has changed. I thought at first I could develop relationships with 25 kids in the classroom, well I'm not going to be able to do that.

One student struggled with the idea of being explicit with his students about his values even though he came to the realization that he influenced his students just by his presence.

> T: I guess in the fall, it was just teaching physics. More toward the winter, it was still about teaching, but different ways to teach...This term...I've been thinking more not just about physics, but about educating them, about other things. Not spending class periods talking about current events or anything, but I definitely thought more about it. Like you were giving out some things last term in seminar about the war, things like that that weren't particularly intended for the seminar. I was thinking about when you can do that kind of thing and when that's the right thing to do even when its not something specifically to do with physics. That was the first time I guess values got brought into our class when the war broke out...
>
> I don't really have a kind of a vision. I talked to people about this because some people say "well school should be like this." I don't really know, I don't have that picture in my head. [I've made] steps towards it and I feel like with each step I'll get more of an idea of where I want to go.

We tried to communicate to the students that constructing a vision was a process they were only just beginning. They felt comfortable with being able to only communicate a sense of their vision.

> K: I have half a vision, I think I need a little while. I have an idea of what I want my classroom to be like. I don't think I've developed that into specific principles. Its kind of affective. I know when I feel it...its not evolved that far yet, I can't state it. Either I'm so thrilled with everything that is going on or I'm so miserable because of what's going on outside of the classroom.
>
> My vision is that my students are involved and they think its relevant and they have something to say about it, there's something to be talked about, there is something that is going on now.
>
> I don't have a better global idea of what's happening in the schools, in the school system... I'm not sure where I am in relation to any kind of educational mission.

> P: I really don't know what I want to do to change things. I know when I get a job I'm going to be really frustrated a lot of the time over various things. I don't think it will be clear to me for quite a while what it is I want to change. I don't have a master plan for the way schools should be run in this country. I don't know what my agenda is yet. I can't decide which way we should reform. I know there is something wrong, but I don't see it so much

> as being a part of the schools. I think the problems come from society...Its a deep problem, but in a sense I think education is more on the receiving end of the problems.

One intern admitted that he never considered himself as a potential change agent until he was explicitly confronted with the idea in seminar. But, he evidenced a struggle with the idea; almost a fear of commitment to a vision, "because things aren't going to change, and if they do it will take 40 years and there are teachers who will never change." At the same time though, he articulated ideas of how to create change; "we should have teacher preparation programs like this one so that you can eventually have an impact, and we can do it if we just get together."

Conclusions

We discerned four periods in the interns' retrospective accounts of the program and their teaching. They began with a naive idealism; they were going to "bring everything alive for their students," they were going to have a strong impact on their students' lives and create a great deal of change. Then, as they were confronted with the realities and complexities of teaching, the interns turned their focus to content and pedagogy. In the third period, the students expressed a pessimism and depression that in part reflected the socialization of the schools and their inability to bring their ideals into their classrooms. At the same time they struggled with the difficulty of learning how to teach. In many ways, the interns' evolution was quite consistent with developmental schemes described in the first-year teacher literature (Berliner, 1988; Ryan, 1988).

In the final period their ideals began to re-emerge. The interns began to see themselves as potential agents of change. Their perspectives were informed by their reflections on their experiences over the year and the explicit focus in seminar. The interns seemed to embrace an idea expressed by one of our speakers; "having a vision doesn't mean that you get to realize it," but if you don't work to articulate a vision, you have nothing to move towards.

If your philosophy of teacher education includes the idea that teachers must be a part of the struggle for educational change, then we believe that you must take the time to incorporate this into the curriculum. Simply believing in the idea without committing a portion of your program to it will have little impact on your students. The socialization process which takes place both within the schools and within our own schools of teacher education works against change and functions to maintain the existing system (Britzman, 1991; Freedman, 1991; Lightfoot, 1983; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985).

Many of the students who enter teacher education programs are very idealistic about the changes they can bring about. What happens to those students and their ideals? What are the links to attrition rates in the first year of teaching? Are we losing first year teachers because they do not have a solid reality base, or because they are disillusioned and frustrated that they will never achieve their educational visions? Or worse, are we keeping teachers that have lost their ideals? At present this study can only begin to address questions of immediate impact, but it represents a first step in a longitudinal consideration of the effects of preparing novice teachers to grapple with the dialectic between the real and the ideal in public education.

References

Berliner, David (1988). Implications of studies of expertise in pedagogy for teacher education and evaluation. In Joanne Pfleiderer (Ed.) *New Directions for Teacher Assessment: Proceedings of the 1988 ETS Invitational Conference*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Britzman, Deborah P. (1991). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Freedman, Sara (1991). Weeding Woman out of "Woman's True Profession": The Effects of the Reforms on Teaching and Teachers . In Joyce Antler and S. K. Biklen (Eds.). *Changing Education: Women As Radicals And Conservators*, (pp. 239-256). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Joyce, Bruce and Weil, Marsha (1986). *Models of Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lightfoot, Sara Lawrence (1983). The Lives of Teachers. In L. S. Shulman and G. Sykes (Eds.) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* (pp. 241-260). New York: Longman.

Ryan, Kevin (1988). *The Stages of Teaching*. A presentation for the Union College Series on the Art and Science of Teaching. Union College, Schenectady, New York.

Zeichner, Kenneth and Tabachnick, R. (1985). The development of teacher perspectives: Social strategies and institutional control in the socialization of beginning teachers. *Journal of Education for Teachers*, *7*, 1-25.

Appendix A

Course Syllabus

Teacher as Change Agent

EDS 250 C | Spring Term 1991 | Kaufman/McDonald

Days: Mondays, April 1 - June 10, 1991
Time: 3:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Rooms: Humanities 114/116

Office #s: Kaufman - 370-6609
McDonald -370-6361
Hours: T/Th 3:30 - 4:30 and
and by appointment

Course Outline:

April 1	Introduction - Course Overview Reflections on Personal Transitions from June through present Dialectic between the Real and the Ideal Course Assignments/Structure - Professional Portfolio Readings/Framework - Assignments/Grading - Expectations
April 8	Teachers Lives Teacher Empowerment Laura Kaplan
April 15	Professionalism (background)
April 22	Top-Down Professionalism
April 29	Bottom-Up Professionalism Teacher as Researcher
May 6	Teachers as Political Actors Teachers Unions -- Tom Dela Salla
May 13	Teaching as a Political Act Byron Nichols & Felmon Davis
May 20	School Reform (background)
May 27	School Reform - Conservatism vs. Radicalism School Restructuring/ Alternative Programs Esther Willison & Scott Hartl
June 3	Models for School Reform Critical Pedagogy Portfolios Due
June 10	Picking up the pieces and moving forward

Grading: 50% Internship & Professional Portfolio - Due on or before June 3rd
50% Reader responses - 1/2 grade off for each one missed

Required Text:

Britzman, Deborah P. (1991). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Required Readings: with tentative due dates

Empowerment and Teachers Lives

April 8th

Lightfoot, Sara Lawrence (1983). The Lives of Teachers. In L. S. Shulman and G. Sykes (Eds.) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* (pp. 241-260). New York: Longman.

Freedman, Sara, Jackson, Jane, and Boles, Katherine (1983). Teaching: An Imperilled "Profession". In L. S. Shulman and G. Sykes (Eds.) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* (pp. 261-291). New York: Longman.

Jane (1990). *The Abortion Service*. Unpublished manuscript.

Britzman - Foreword and Ch. 1

Professionalism

April 15th

Zeichner, Kenneth M. (1991). Contradictions and tensions in the professionalization of teaching and the democratization of schools. *Teachers College Record, 92* (3), 363-379.

Freedman, Sara (1991). Weeding Woman out of "Woman's True Profession": The Effects of the Reforms on Teaching and Teachers . In Joyce Antler and S. K. Biklen (Eds.). *Changing Education: Women As Radicals And Conservators*, (pp. 239-256). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lloyd, Susan M. (1991). Collision courses, safer places: Teacher licensure, private schools, and the making of a profession. *Teachers College Record, 92* (3), 451-469.

Britzman - Ch. 2

April 22nd

Brandt, Ron (1990). On Restructuring Schools: A Conversation with Al Shanker. *Educational Leadership, 47* (7), 11-16.

Brandt, Ron (1989). On Teacher Empowerment: A Conversation with Ann Lieberman. *Educational Leadership, 46* (8), 23-26.

Darling-Hammond, Linda (1988). The Futures of Teaching. *Educational Leadership, 46* (3), 4-10.

Urbanski, Adam (1988). The Rochester Contract: A Status Report. *Educational Leadership, 46* (3) 48-52.

Wise, Arthur E. (1990). Six Steps to Teacher Professionalism. *Educational Leadership, 47* (7), 57-60.

Britzman - Ch. 3

Teacher as Researcher

April 29th

Cochran-Smith, M., Lytle, S. L.(1990). Research on Teaching and Teacher Research: The Issues that Divide, *Educational Researcher, 19* (2), 2-11.

Minstrell, Jim (1991). Teacher, Researcher. *Teacher Magazine*, Feb., 28-29.

Branscombe, Amanda (1987). I gave away my classroom. In Dixie Goswami and Peter R. Stillman (Eds.) *Reclaiming the classroom: Teacher research as an agency for change*, (pp. 13-19). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook/ Heinemann.

Britton, James (1987). A quiet form of research. In Dixie Goswami and Peter R. Stillman (Eds.) *Reclaiming the classroom: Teacher research as an agency for change*, (pp. 13-19). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook/ Heinemann.

Knoblauch, C. H. and Brannon, L. (1988). Knowing our knowledge: A phenomenological basis for teacher research. In L. Z. Smith (Ed.), *Audits of meaning: A Festschrift in honor of Ann E. Berthoff*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Odell, Lee (1987). Planning classroom research. In Dixie Goswami and Peter R. Stillman (Eds.) *Reclaiming the classroom: Teacher research as an agency for change*, (pp. 128-160). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook/ Heinemann.

April 29th -cont.-

The Philadelphia Teachers Learning Cooperative (1984). On becoming teacher experts: Buying time. *Language Arts, 6* (1), 731-736.

Yonemura, M. (1982). Teacher conversations: A potential source of their own professional growth. *Curriculum Inquiry, 12* (3), 239-256.

Teachers as Political Actors

May 6

Carlson, Dennis (1987). Teachers as Political Actors. *Harvard Educational Review, 57* (3), 283-307.

Weinshank, Annette B., Trumbull, Emily S., and Daly, Patrick L. (1983). The Role of the Teacher in School Change. In L. S. Shulman and G. Sykes (Eds.) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* (pp. 300-314), New York, Longman.

Britzman - Ch. 4

May 13

Karp, Stan (1990). Rethinking schools. *Z Magazine, 3* (6), 6-11.

Weiler, Kathleen (1991). You've Got to Stay There and Fight: Sex Equity, Schooling and Work. In Joyce Antler and S. K. Biklen (Eds.). *Changing Education: Women As Radicals and Conservators* (pp. 217-236). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Britzman - Ch. 5

School Reform

May 20th

Cuban, Larry (1990). Reforming Again, Again, and Again. *Educational Researcher, 19* (1), 3-13.

Shulman, Lee S. (1983). Autonomy and Obligation. In L. S. Shulman and G. Sykes (Eds.) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* (pp. 484-504), New York: Longman.

May 20th - cont.-

(review again the Kenneth Zeichner article, the Stan Karp article and the Adam Urbanski article listed above)

May 27th

Korn, Claire V. (1991). *Alternative American Schools: Ideals in Action.* (Chapters 4, 5, and 7) New York: State University of New York.

Thomas, Donald W. (1985). The Torpedo's Touch, *Harvard Educational Review, 55* (2), 220-222.

(review again the Susan Lloyd article and the Ron Brandt (1990) article from above)

Critical Pedagogy

June 3rd

Shor, Ira (1987). *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life.* (Chapters 2 and 3). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

The Given vs. the Possible

June 10th

Britzman Ch. 6